

BROADCAST 4892

DATE: April 24, 2008

TO: Local Directors, Eligibility Supervisors, and Eligibility Workers

FROM: Tom Steinhauser, Director of Benefit Programs

SUBJECT: National Voter Registration Act

CONTACT: Walter S. Burton, Jr. (804) 726-7365 or walter.burton@dss.virginia.gov

The National Voter Registration Act (NVRA) of 1993 requires local departments of social services to offer each applicant for, or recipient of, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, Food Stamps, and Medicaid an opportunity to apply to register to vote. The opportunity to apply to register must be offered at initial application, at each review of eligibility, and any time a change of address is reported to the local agency in person. This is a matter of importance to everyone involved and we recognize that it is everyone's desire to ensure and/or enhance compliance with the NVRA.

Recently, the Virginia Department of Social Services received a letter from voter rights advocacy group expressing concern about the implementation of the requirements of the National Voter Registration Act (NVRA) by the social services system of Virginia. You will find the requirements relative to your voter registration responsibilities in Appendix II to Chapter 400 in the TANF manual (<http://www.dss.virginia.gov/files/division/bp/tanf/policy/manual/400.pdf>), Part II, Appendix I in the Food Stamp Manual (<http://www.dss.virginia.gov/files/division/bp/fs/policy/manual/p02.pdf>), and the M0110.300 A. 3. of the Medicaid Manual (http://www.dss.virginia.gov/files/division/bp/me_famis/policy/manual/m01.pdf). Please review your responsibilities relative to voter registration to ensure compliance with the Act. Additionally, you are encouraged to review the State Board of Elections' [*Agency-Based Voter Registration Reference Manual*](#). These materials will provide guidance on the handling of our voter registration responsibilities.

The State Board of Elections, which has responsibility for voter registration in Virginia, has requested that we inform local departments of social services of the procedure for obtaining voter registration forms. It is essential that local agencies have a supply of voter registration forms on hand at all times. You should also have forms available in the lobby for the general public to take. The forms are available at no charge.

The forms request may be submitted electronically or by U.S. mail to Mr. Garry Ellis, NVRA/Voter Registration Coordinator, at:

State Board of Elections
200 North Ninth Street

Room 100
Richmond, VA 23219
E-mail Address:
garry.ellis@sbe.virginia.gov

Please provide the following information with your order:

1. Form name: "Virginia Voter Registration Application Form" -- Form number: VA-NVRA-1 (Rev. 10/07);
2. Number of forms requested;
3. Name of local department of social services (LDSS);
4. Name, title, department, and phone number of LDSS contact person;
5. Physical mailing address of LDSS (i.e., street address, not post office box).
Shipping is handled by United Parcel Service (UPS) and must meet UPS address requirements; and
6. If forms should be mailed to satellite offices, include the address and number of forms requested for each office where forms are to be sent.

If you have any questions about ordering forms, please contact Mr. Ellis at (804) 864-8910 or 1-800-552-9745. You may also fax your request to (804) 371-0914.

Compliance with the NVRA is mandatory as we seek to ensure that those that we serve have the opportunity to register to vote. Virginia has already been the subject of one law suit for initially refusing to implement the NVRA. We appreciate your efforts to ensure staff take the required actions relative to voter registration and look forward to working with you to enhance our services to clients and avoid any future litigation regarding implementation of the NVRA.